

ISRAEL'S
Lamentation
AT THE
DEATH of a PROPHET.
IN A
SERMON
Preached at the
FUNERAL
OF THAT
Holy, Learned, and Painful Minister of Christ,
Mr. THOMAS CAWTON.
And now published at the earnest Desire of the
HEARERS.

By Nathaniel Wincest, M. A. Minister of the Gospel.

*Zach. 1. 5, Your Fathers whom are they? and the Prophets do they
live for ever?*

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Lamentation

DOETH A PROPHECY

SERMON

PRELIMINARY

And now published at the end of the

HEARS

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HEARS

By Thomas Cannon

And now published at the end of the

LONDON: Printed by T. Baskett, at the

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To the much respected Mrs. Anne Owen
the disconsolate Relict of Mr.
Thomas Canton.

I Heartily sympathize with you in your loss
which is the Churches as well as yours;
and which is so great, that none but He can
make up who fills all in all. Your Faith and
Patience are now put upon a noble trial; and if
you can believe and bear this affliction with sub-
mission, I make no question but your Faith will
never fail, and no burthen will be able to sink
you. The time is short, therefore they that have
Husbands must be as though they had none, and
they that weep, as though they wept not.

Your Husband is not lost, but gone before; whi-
ther you must needs follow, if you
hold on in the narrow path that leads to life.
I am confident your dear Toke-fellow will live in
your memory while you have a memory: Let the
word which he preached live and abide in you;
and shew that it does so, by your living accordingly.

Though your grief be never so excessive, yet it is
by

by thousands of degrees less than the joy that he
has among the spirits of just men made perfect;
and the thoughts of that joy should give a check
to your sorrow; since it is so infinitely better with
him where he is, than it could have been, had he
still continued with you. Be not cast down, let not
your Soul be disquieted within you; God has ta-
ken him away, and is ready to step into his room,
and to be unspeakably more to you than ever he
was, or could be. Hope in God and praise him, who
is the health of your countenance, and your God.

Now that you may be a Widow indeed, and
continue in prayer and supplication night and
day, and trust in Him, who has said that if the
Widows cry at all to him he will hear, for he
is gracious: Is the earnest desire of

Your affectionate Brother and Servant
for Christs sake,

NATHANIEL VINCENT

Israel's Lamentation at the Death of a Prophet, &c.

1 SAM. XXV. 1, form. part.

And Samuel died, and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him.

IT is easie in the sad faces of this Assembly, to read the sorrow of your hearts: when you see *Another* come into this Pulpit, and remember that *He* who was wont to preach in it, has preacht his last. I make no question but your sorrow rises and is ready to flow over, and truly great mourning is not unallowable or indecent, where so very great a loss has been sustained. Well may the Flock lament, when their Shepherd, and such a Shepherd, is finit-

ten;

the death of those whose work and business it was to turn you from Sin to Righteousness. And though the frequent Funerals of Ministers be lookt upon as no such lamentable spectacle by them that are weary of the Gospel, and say *unto God depart from us*; yet it must be affirmed, that all who value their Souls, and are perswaded that the Gospel contains the gladdest tidings, cannot but be in bitterness, when Death, or rather the Lord by it, imposes an everlasting silence upon such as used to preach these glad tidings of Salvation.

The Text presents *Israel* in Mourning; there was a solemn Assembly, and all lamenting. Why what ailed them? Was the destroying Angel's sword drawn forth among them? Or were the fruits of the earth blasted, and they under the apprehensions of a terrible Famine? Or were they invaded by their ill neighbours and inveterate enemies the *Philistines*? No, no; but a Prophet was dead, and this Prophet was *Samuel*; *And Samuel died, and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him.*

In which words you have these Particulars observable:

Israels Lamentation at the

1. Here is the Priviledg of Israel implied, They once had a Samuel.

2. Here is Israels Loss, they were deprived of this priviledg, Samuel died.

3. He did not die unlamented, the Israelites lamented him; and truly he was not worthy of the name of an Israelite, whose heart was not affected at the heavy news of Samuels departure.

4. This Lamentation was general, for all the Israelites, that is, a great multitude of all sorts and conditions were assembled together to solemnize his Funeral, and to bewail the taking away of so holy and faithful a Prophet and Instructor.

We begin with the first of these, Israels Priviledg, They once had a Samuel. And the point of Doctrine hence arising is,

Doct. 1. That 'tis a great priviledg to enjoy Prophets. Samuel was asked of God, and when given, his Mother sings a Song of Praise, 1 Sam.

2. 1--10. The Israelites had an Hophni, and a Phinehas too, but these were both their shame and snare; by their vicious and debauched lives they made the people of the Lord to transgress, and the Offerings of the Lord to be abhorred,

575 H

1 Sam.

Death of a Prophet.

5

1 Sam. 2. 17. But Samuel was a blessing to Israel; God revealed himself to Samuel, and Samuel published the Word of God to Israel; whereas a little before, the word of the Lord had been precious and rare, and there had been no open Vision, 1 Sam. 3. 1.

Many rejoiced at the Birth of John the Baptist, and they had reason, for he proved a burning and a shining light, and turned the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, Luk. 1. 14, 17.

The Apostle speaks of various gifts of the Spirit, 1 Cor. 14, but prefers Propheesying before them all, because most useful. He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation, and comfort, v. 3. Of one of the Fathers, who for his Golden Eloquence was called Chrysostom, 'twas said, that rather than he should be shot out of the Pulpit, 'twere better the Sun should be out of the Firmament.

That 'tis a priviledg to enjoy Prophets, may thus be made further evident.

1. The Lord consults, and has a regard to our infirmity and weakness, in dealing with us by men of like passions with our selves. Of old he came down upon Mount Sinai, and spake with an

audible voice to Israel, but the voice amazed them; it was so Majestick and terrible, that they cry out, *If we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die*, Deut. 5. 25. Nay Moses himself as well as the Israelites, was in a great fear and trembling, Heb. 12. 21. When our Lord appeared unto his Beloved Disciple John, as one *Walking in the midst of the Golden Candlesticks, his head and his hair as white as wool, and his eyes like unto a flame of fire; his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice like unto the sound of many waters;* We read that John seeing him, *fell at his feet as one dead*, Rev. 1. 13, to 17.

✠ If God should deal with us more immediately by Visions and Voices, our sinful frailty could not bear it; Our bellies would tremble, our lips would quiver at his voice, and rottenness would enter into our loins, Hab. 3. 16. Therefore we must ascribe it to his gracious indulgence, that he makes use of the Ministry of mortal men, who being formed out of the clay as well as our selves, may not terrify us, but in a plain and familiar manner declare the will of God to us.

2. These

Death of a Prophet.

† 2. These Prophets are Ambassadors to treat of Peace. And Peace is sweet both name and thing; and so much the more desirable, by how much the Adversary is infinitely dreadful and irresistible. Let the potsherd strike with the potsherd of the earth, but woe be to that man that contendeth with his Maker. How easily can his iron rod dash these potsherd all to pieces! Man is pitied in his madness: for when he rushes into sin, he rushes into the battel against the Almighty; and therefore the Lord being unwilling he should perish, offers to be friends: he sent his Son to make peace, and the Blood of Christ was shed, that Sinners who before were far off, might be brought nigh; the Prophets also are commissioned to offer peace upon most reasonable and honourable terms; their Ministry is called the Ministry of Reconciliation; the Gospel which they preach, is called the Gospel of peace; nay they are not only to declare a willingness in God, though he is so high and mighty, and has been so highly offended, to receive them; but they are to intreat them to be reconciled, and to stand out no longer, 2 Cor. 5. 20. Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as
though

though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's Stead be ye reconciled to God.

+ 3. These Prophets make the best offers that ever were made unto the sons of men. Though Satan should take you up, and shew you as he did our Lord, all the Kingdoms of the world, and all the glory of them; and should say, All these will I give you; yet we can tell you who outbids him, who will give you ten thousand times more, and berter. The Ministers of Christ do tell you of a Pearl of Price, of riches that are unsearchable, of an enduring substance of a new and divine nature, which you may partake of; of a perfection of holiness, knowledge, happiness; of a Kingdom that cannot be moved, of an Inheritance that is incorruptible; and Oh thou lying and deceitful Tempter, what are all thy offers, in comparison of these things, but nothing, less than nothing, and meer vanity!

+ 4. These Prophets are sent on purpose to prevent the loss and ruin of that which is most precious, the immortal soul; therefore they cry aloud and spare not: therefore they call Heaven and Earth to witness against Sinners, and set before them life and death, that life may be chosen,
and

and death escaped. True Prophets are lovers of Souls, and are solicitous about them, and are afraid of their miscarrying. *Res est solliciti plena timoris amor.* They inquire into the state of Souls, and endeavour to heal the distempers which Souls labour under; they are concerned when Souls are lethargick, and labour to awaken them; and how are their compassions moved, when Souls are wounded with a sense of sin, and the wrath of God? and they are ready to bear them up from sinking, and to discover the comforts of the Gospel to them.

+ That Salvation which the Prophets preach, is upon this account stiled, *great Salvation*, Heb. 2. 3, because 'tis more than temporal, because 'tis more than of the life or body; 'tis the salvation of the Soul. The Ministers of Christ are sent to shew, how Souls that are of greatest worth, and in greatest danger, may be secured, and that for ever. The Apostle tells us, *We must believe to the saving of the soul*, Heb. 10. 39; and if we continue stedfast in the faith, we shall at length receive the end of our faith; even the salvation of our souls, 1 Pet. 1. 9.

+ 5. There is a special presence that is promised with

with these Prophets, even to the end of the world; Mat. 28. ult. Lo, I am with you (says he that has all power both in Heaven and Earth) *alway*, even to the end of the world. The Apostles did live but a short time, therefore the Promise assures a presence of Christ with their successors who carry on the same design, and preach the same Faith which they did. And if the Lord be with his Ministers, the enjoyment of them is a vast priviledg; Satan falls like lightning before them. *Beelzebub* and all his Angels are foil'd and vanquished, hearts are changed, and the strongest holds are pull'd down. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5, The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledg of God, and bringing every thought into captivity unto the obedience of Christ.

Now follows the use that is to be made of this Doctrine.

- † I. Prophets are to be received with the greatest gladness; the feet of them should be looked upon as beautiful that preach the Gospel of peace, that bring glad tidings of good things; Rom. 10.

15. The Galatians were delighted with the blessed news of Christ and of Salvation, when the Apostle first did publish the Gospel to them; To receive me, says he, as an Angel of God, that was high; nay, even as Christ Jesus, that was higher. Where is then the blassest ye spake of, for I bear you record, that if it had been possible you would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me, Gal. 4. 15.

+ 16. Prophets are to be received with fear and trembling; for they come from an Everlasting King to whom fear does appertain; and though their Ministry be a great privilege, yet if we are without fear or care, we shall grow worse under it, and the word in their mouths may prove not a favour of life unto life, but a favour of death unto death to us. When Samuel came to Bethlehem, the Elders of the town trembled at his coming, 1 Sam. 16. 4. Titus likewise was received with trembling by the Corinthians, 2 Cor. 7. 15. His inward affection is more abundant towards you, whilst he remembreth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him. Mens hearts should stand in awe of the Word of God, and stoop unto every truth and

duty which is delivered to them; they should be inquisitive to know the will of God, and not dare to go contrary to this will made known, for fear they should be beaten with the more stripes, *Luk. 12. 47.*

+ 3. Prophets are to be believed, because 'tis in truth the Word of God which they do deliver; the Vessel is earthen, but the Treasure is not the less excellent; the Messengers are men, but the Message is faithful and worthy of all acceptance. Thus the *Thessalonians* lookt beyond man to God, *1 Thes. 2. 13,* For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

+ What inward evidences of truth are there in the Word which is preached to you? what a self-discovering light shines here? what purity, what majesty, what glory is here visible! how is the honour of God, and the repairing and healing of corrupted nature, the scope of the Gospel! every where you may perceive this design carried on, that God may be known,

re-

remembered, admired, loved, obeyed. Besides, what external motives of credibility are you furnished with? Miracles in nature were wrought at first for the confirmation of the Gospel, and Miracles of Grace (in giving eyes to blind souls, and in raising such as are dead in sin) are wrought to this day.

+ 4. Prophets are highly to be esteemed in love for their works sake, 1 Thes 5. 12, 13. You are to know them, and to know them as such who are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and accordingly to love and esteem them. In loving them, you love your selves; and in esteeming them, 'tis evident you put an estimate upon your own Souls; and they would not be so much concerned at your hatred, were not that hatred a wronging of your Souls, and a loving of death.

+ 5. Wo be unto those who despise these Prophets.
1. They despise both Christ and God together. Luk. 10. 16. He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me. And to despise God as sending Christ, is to despise him, notwithstanding the greatest demonstra-

141 *Israel's Lamentation at the*

tion of his Wisdom, Love and Power, in con-
triving and bringing about mans Redemption
and Salvation.

* *They shall know that Prophets have been
among them; Ezek 33, 33. They shall know it
by seeing afar off, and missing that Heaven and
Glory which the Prophets told them of, and by
feeling that wrath and vengeance of eternal
fire which the Prophets faithfully warned them
to escape. Though all unbelievers go to Hell,
yet they are cured of their infidelity when
once they come thither. Feeling is believing.
They are forced then to acknowledge that the
Prophets spake true; and how do they call
themselves fools, in that they were so slow of
heart to credit them.*

*Thus do Israel's priviledge they had so long
enjoyed.*

* *In the next place I am to speak of **Wheels**
lost. This **Samuel** died. He that governed with
such righteousness and integrity, he that pray-
ed with such fervency, he that preached with
such efficacy. He died. He died. How univer-
sal is thy Dominion. grieve that thou always free
Infants from the yoke of sin, who are born on the*

youngest and strongest, and they are not able
to withstand thy power I thow throwest the
Prince out of his Throne, and the Richer out
of the Pulpit. Neither Greatness nor Godde
ness is a defence against thee, solar totally to de
livered thy from thee. *Ebend fugaces Posthumeri
Pulsantur, Labuntur ante, curd pietas morantur Euan
giz in infantis senecta, Afferet indomitq; Martis.
Horat. li 25 Ode 14.* By no man will sented into
the world, and death by sin, and for death passed
upon all man, for that all have sined, Rom. 5. 12 & v

The Doctrine from the second Particular in
the Text, That Daniel died, *1251 yldnes nish
in Doh 12.* Is this? The Prophets must not al
ways predecease live, but within a little while
they give over work, and die as well as others.
It was a truth which the Jews spake, though
they made an ill use of it, *Joh. 8. 53.* Our Fa
ther Abraham is dead, and the Prophets are also
dead. They dwell in houses of clay like other
men, and their earthly tabernacles must also
be dissolved, *ni K ni yeh 25 nish nish gais lob*

The Reason why the Prophets die is three
fold. They are by part of Adams progeny, and par
take of the same sinful corrupted nature with others.
The first man Adam infected the Humane Na
ture,

ture, and all descending from him by ordinary generation, partake of a Nature polluted. Though *Adam* at first was made after the Image of God, yet after his Fall 'tis said he *begat a Son after his own Image*, Gen. 5. 3; and this Son was *Seth*, from whom at length came the promised Seed, in whom all Nations are blessed: And all partaking of the Image of old *Adam*, no wonder all are mortal, and die as he did. Christ delivers his from the sting of death always, and many times from the fear of it; but yet death so far prevails, as to break in pieces their earthly tabernacle; though at length *this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; and death and the grave shall be swallowed up in victory.*

+ 2. The Prophets days many times are shortened with hard labour. Ministers must not be like reeds shaken with the wind; complying and bending every way as the wind turns; neither must they be men wearing soft clothing, and indulging their flesh as they in Kings Courts are wont to do; but in Scripture they are compared to Shepherds, and Shepherds look well to the flock, though the drought consume them by day, and the frost by night, and their sleep many times

times departeth from their eyes, Gen. 21. 40. They are compared to Husbandmen, to Builders, which are neither useless nor idle Callings. They are compared to Labourers, in the Harvest, and that is hot work, especially when the Harvest is great, and the Labourers are very few. Finally they are likened unto Fishers; and how do these toil in the waters! and when there is respite from that labour, they are minding their Nets, that they may to work again. He that desires this holy office, desires a good work, 1 Tim. 3. 1. Work he must reckon upon; and the body has not been able to keep pace with the souls of several that have been engaged in it, and so body and soul have parted the sooner.

3. The Prophets are *leaders, and are set at the front of the battel*; the enemies of the Church principally strike at these, and many times prevail, and cut them off. As according to the Apostle, *The Priesthood being changed, there is of necessity a change also of the Law.* So if the Ministry of the Gospel be destroyed in any place, the Gospel it self would hardly long continue. No wonder that the storm beats most vehemently upon them; no wonder that Earth and Hell do in a special manner hate them, and endeavour

18. *Israel's Lamentation at the*
deavour their destruction. The Apostle Paul
encourages Timothy, To endure hardness as a good
soldier of Jesus Christ, 1 Tim. 2. 3. Prophets
are soldiers, and are set in the place of the great
test danger, and tis no marvel to hear of a
Soldiers dying in the battell.

4. The Prophets are called *honte*, because they
spend their strength in vain, and Israel refuses to
be gathered. After they have for some time
plowed upon rocks, plowed the sand, the Lord
calls them from work, and will not suffer them
to sow any more seed, whereof no good fruit
comes; and we be unto that barren ground,
where no more seed is to be sown; it is rejected,
it is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.

5. Prophets are taken away because evils are
coming. And truly their very taking away, espe-
cially of many together, is a sad prognostick of
approaching desolation. Lot went out of Sodom
just when fire and brimstone were ready to be
rained upon them. Luther died before the Wars
of Germany broke forth. It is a strange Prophecie
which Mel. Adamus, writes came from him, Lu-
ther often said; *Se vivente, propitio Deo, bellum*
in Christianis non futurum, se autem mortuo vide-
rat posteritas. That as long as he lived God
would

would be gracious, and not suffer War to be in Germany; but after his decease, Posterity should see the Sword drawn. And truly Luther in both respects did prove a true Prophet. 'Tis not unusual for the Lord to house his faithful Messengers and Saints in Heaven, where they shall rest and rejoice, just before great distres and perplexity is coming upon Nations where they lived.

6. Prophets die, because their reward cannot be received till after death. Paul upon this account did desire to be dissolved, because he knew that to die would be gain to him, and that after his departure out of the body, he should be present with the Lord for ever. Ministers are now promised a Crown, and are encouraged by the certain hopes of it; but their Coronation cannot be till after their dissolution; after death that promise is accomplished, 1 Pet. 5. 4, *And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a Crown of Glory which fadeth not away.*

The Use of this Doctrine follows.

1. *Pray for the lengthning of the Prophets lives.* You are allowed to beg of the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth faithful labourers into his harvest, Mat. 9. ult. surely then you may intreat, that such labourers may be continued in the harvest. The Apostle speaks of being given unto the Churches
D through

through their prayers. Fervent prayers have fetched Ministers from the very brink of the Grave. Nay Peter condemn'd to die, was released by prayer; and the Prison-doors, though of Iron, was broken open by the power of the Churches supplications! Oh strive together in prayer for your Prophets, that they may live, and live to purpose, and that they may be instrumental to cause many to pass from death to life, that so they may never fall into eternal condemnation.

+ 2. Be not deaf unto the voice of the Prophets, since ere it be long they must call no more. They offer Christ, and call you to Repentance to day; but their breath is in their nostrils, and 'tis a question whether they may live to call again, to make another offer; and therefore while it is called to day, harden not your hearts, Heb. 2. 7.

3. Bless the Lord, that though the Prophets die, after their death they still speak to you. By their Faith they speak, Heb. 11. 4; By faith Abel being dead, yet speaketh. By the manner of their lives they speak; their heavenly conversation declared plainly that they sought a Country; and you should imitate them, that God may not be ashamed to be called your God, but may prepare for you a City. They speak also by their death, that you must follow, and several of the Prophets have gone triumphing to Heaven. One said

said, Though I shall change my place, I shall not change my company. And another was able to say when expiring, *Jesus take me, I am ready.* O who would not live, that he might die like these!

Finally, the Prophets speak by the Monuments they have left behind them. I mean the excellent Writings they compiled. At the Synod of Dort 'twas said, *Clerus Britannicus stupor Mundi.* The English Clergy is the wonder of the World. And an outlandish Writer acknowledges, *Inter Theologos Practicos, precipui sunt Angli.* Among Practical Divines the English are the principal. That old sound Doctrine of Faith in Christ Crucified, and Justification by imputed Righteousness, and the necessity of Holiness in heart and life, has made England famous ever since the Reformation; and may this Doctrine be maintain'd and flourish till the worlds end!

+ 4. Though the Prophets die, yet remember the word of the Lord endures for ever, 1 Pet. 1. 24, 25, For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass: the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever: and this is the word that by the Gospel is preached unto you. The Tribunal which the Prophets speak of, All must appear before, and hold up their hands at that Bar; the threatnings they de-

nounced will take hold of the ungodly, and the punishments threatned in the other world will last for ever; and likewise the Rest and Happiness will be everlasting which is promised to them that by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour and immortality, Rom. 2. 7. Our Lord tells us, that the Wicked at the great day, shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal, Mat. 25. ult.

+ 5. Let us look unto our Lord Jesus, who dies no more, that he would take care of his Church and People; and provide that there be a succession of Pastors and Prophets while the world endures. Our Lord is ascended up on high, and has led Captivity captive, and has received gifts for men, and he is ready to send Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledg of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13. He has the residue of the Spirit; and as when some Stars set, others always do arise; so he can raise up *Elisba's* in the room of *Elijab's*, who shall come with a double portion of their Predecessors Spirit.

We come now to the third Particular in the Text,
When

When Samuel died, Israel lamented him: Whence observe, That the death of Prophets calls for, and well deserves great lamentation. When Stephen that stout Preacher of the Faith of Christ, and Proto-martyr died, 'tis said, Devout men carried him to his burial, and made great lamentation over him, Act. 8. 2. That the loss of Prophets is great, and deserves great mourning, may appear several ways.

1. Prophets are watchmen to warn sinners of the sword that's coming. Ezek. 33. 7, Son of man, I have set thee a watchman to the house of Israel, therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and shalt warn them from Me. And as they that take not warning, so they that have not warning, shall die in their iniquity; therefore 'tis a lamentable loss to lose those that are to give warning. What is that sword that the Watchmen warn concerning? you read of it Dent. 32. 41, If I whet my glittering sword, and my hand take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to my enemies, and will reward them that hate me. This sword will make dreadful work in an Almighty hand: Oh what wounds and blows will it give! happy those that have and take warning, to prevent the feeling of them!

2. Prophets discover the wiles and devices of Satan. He is a subtle spirit; but by the Prophets you are told of his stratagems: and who can make you so wise

wife as not to be circumvented? namely, our Lord Jesus, in whom are hid all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge. You are told, that if you are strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, the principalities and powers of hell shall not prevail; and if you put on the whole armour of God, you shall be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil, Eph. 6. 10, 12. But if those are taken away who should tell you of Satans policy, and what a liar and murderer he is, Souls are in great danger; for corrupted nature is prone to yield to him, and counts it a desirable liberty, though it be indeed a slavery to be led captive by him at his will.

3. Prophets do feed the people with that knowledge which is life eternal, and without which they must needs perish. Job. 17, This is life eternal to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Hos. 4. 6, My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Neither heart nor life can be good, where the knowledge of God is not. Well therefore may Instructors be wept over, when they must instruct no longer.

4. Prophets administer those Ordinances which the Lord himself has instituted, and will bless unto Souls eternal advantage. The Ministers of Christ are sent to preach the Word, to Baptize in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; they are to break the Bread

Bread which is the Communion of the Body of Christ, and to bless the cup of blessing. And our Lord Jesus, who has appointed these Ordinances, is ready to add a mighty efficacy to them, so that Conversion, Confirmation, Consolation, are the effects of them.

5. The loss of Prophets will appear to be lamentable, if we consider, that they stand in the gap to turn away wrath. True Prophets have a great interest in Heaven. God said to Abimelech concerning Abraham, *He is a Prophet, and he shall pray for thee.* Gen. 20. 7. The Elders of the Church are to be sent for to pray over the sick. One Moses by prayer turned away wrath from all Israel. If Moses had then been dead, what a case had Israel been in? *Psal. 106. 23, Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.* *1. Tim. 2. 1.*

6. Prophets are Fathers; and few are so void of natural affection, as not to follow a Father to the grave weeping. The Apostle proves himself a Father to the Corinthians, because he had begotten them in Christ by the Gospel. And truly those who are *Kite Nova Patres*, Fathers in reference to our Regeneration, we have a greater benefit by, than by the Fathers of our flesh.

7. Prophets are the Chariots of Israel, and the Horse,

Horsemen thereof. Elisba had chariots and horses of fire round about him, and did more towards the preservation of Israel, than whole Armies could. The Church is affirmed to be terrible as an army with banners; what then are the Leaders of this Church? Those that as Princes can have power and prevail with God, whom may they not prevail against? The loss of so many Prophets of late, well may it be lookt upon as an enfeebling of the Nation; every one of them *precibus & lacrymis*, by prayers and tears might have done more for the peace and defence of this Island, than a thousand armed men with all their weapons.

Use 1. of Reproof, which belongs to those who rejoice when Prophets are taken away, instead of mourning; they prophesied not good concerning them, but evil; and upon this account they are glad when such plain dealers are gone, who were but a torment to them. Thus when the Witnesses are slain, They that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, & make merry, & send gifts one to another, Rev. 11. 10.

1. This kind of temper is an evidence of an unregenerate state; 'tis a sign mens deeds are evil, when they love darkness rather than light, and cannot bear the words of the Lords Prophets, and only care to hear smooth things, and will have deceit prophesied,

Isa. 30. 10.

2. This

Death of a Prophet.

2. This rejoycing at the death of the Prophets, is a sign that wrath is near, and argues a great unlikelihoode of escaping it; because the highest and most probable means to bring to repentance, have been without efficacy. If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be perswaded, though one rose from the dead, Luk. 16. ult. And how far are they from hearkning to the Prophets, who are glad when they are dead, and they must hear them no more?

Use 2. To direct your sorrow, how you should lament over deceased Prophets.

1. Weep not for them, but for your selves, and for your children. The Holy Ministers of Christ, who are taken away, need not your tears; their Faith and Patience is Crown'd, their Pains and Labour rewarded; they are at rest with their Lord whom they served in the Gospel. Their studying, watching, fasting, tears, and troubles, are all over. They were kept from falling, notwithstanding all their temptations; and he that kept them, has presented them faultlesse before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Therefore weep not for them, but weep for your selves and Children; the world that you are in, is full of sin, and snares, and miseries, and vexations; and twill be sad to have

the bread of adversity, and the waters of affliction, and your Teachers taken away besides. The Psalmist, Psal. 74. speaks of great and perpetual desolations, of enemies roaring in the midst of congregations, and saying in their hearts, let us destroy them together; and that which aggravated this misery, and made all the heavier to be born, was *v. 9*, We see not our signs, there is no more any prophet, neither is there among us any that sheweth how long.

2. Lament your unprofitableness under the prophets ministry, that you have not prayed for them, that you have not been thankful for the privilege of enjoying their labours; that you have not been fruitful under the dropping of their word upon you, as you ought, and as might have been expected.

Justifie God in taking Ministers away, and judge your selves, acknowledg the suitableness and equity of the punishment.

But withal, be earnest in your intreaties, that though he has called home many of his Ambassadors, he would not call home All, and bid you an utter defiance, departing himself, and removing the candlestick out of his place.

We come now to the last particular in the Text. This Lamentation over *Sennai* was *General*.

All

Death of a Prophet.

All the *Israelites* lamented him: whence I draw this conclusion, *I deliver you from bondage*.

Doff. 1. *That in the death of Prophets, all sorts of persons have reason to be concerned.* This will be evident thus: *and no man shall be able to stand*.

1. *All stand in need of the help of Prophets.* Those that are dead in sin, have need to be prophecied *over, that the spirit of life may enter into them*: and they that are quickned and converted, need the Ministry for their confirmation, and edifying, in Faith and Holiness; and they that imagine they are above both Ministry and Ordinances, do need it as much as any, that they may be better instructed, and cured of their pride and ignorance, which is likely to prove eternally destructive to them.

2. Good Prophets are of publick spirits, they reckon themselves debtours to all, and therefore wish well to all, and are ready to publish the glad tidings of Salvation whereever they come; their compassions extend not only to them that are called Christians, but also to Jews and Gentiles; and 'tis their desire that Gods way may be known upon earth, and his saving health among all Nations.

3. The Gospel which they preach, is an Universal benefit; therefore all may well be concerned, when they must Preach no more. The Commission comes thus,

Israels Lamentation at the

Go preach the Gospel to every creature, Mark 16. 15. All without exception are invited to come to our Lord Jesus for life. The spirit and the bride say come, and all may drink of the water of life freely.

Use 4. What Lamentation should there be in this City and Subburbs, who have followed so many Prophets lately to their graves! If the death of one put all Israel into mourning; what weeping should there be, when in a twelve-month about twelve have dyed, and sometime two have dyed in one day. They that are good, will mourn upon this account. They that are bad, have greatest reason, though they do not.

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I Have done with all the parts of my Text, and am now to speak of that excellent Person whose death is the occasion of my Preaching upon it. Though it be the work and joy of my life to preach the Gospel, though the Pulpit be more eligible to me than the Throne of the greatest Emperour under the Sun; yet I come into this Pulpit with a sad heart this day, because I come to preach his Funeral-Sermon, who must never now preach more. His face is bound in secret, his mouth is stopt with earth, which used to speak to God and man at such a rate. I blame you not, my Brethren, if your eye-lids gush out with water, if your sighs are many, and your hearts ake; you are indeed to be pitied, for the hand of God has very nearly touched you. If I had the Eloquence of your Pastor that's now gone, I might employ the utmost of it in his just commendation, and in shewing how richly Christ had furnished him for the work whereunto he had called him.

There

Death of a Prophet.

There are eight Particulars which I shall mention concerning him.

1. I begin with his *Extraction*. He was of a Stock eminent for Godliness in the greatest strictness and power. And to be born of those who are born of God, is more honourable and advantageous, than to come of the blood of Nobles. If *the righteous man be more excellent than his neighbour*, How excellent was this Mans Parentage! His Father was a Prophet, eminent for holiness and learning; and his Grandfather was the famous Mr. Rogers, the Author of the *Seven Treatises*; than whom it may truly be said, *England* hardly ever brought forth a man that walked more closely with God.

Let the *Papists* be silent and forbear reproaching Protestant Ministers for marrying, as if their Children never come to good. Behold a Grandfather, Father, and Son, all sincerely holy and able Ministers of the New Testament.

2. He was a Man of an excellent natural temper. Those who are of a Cynical & fowre disposition, though they have the Grace of God in truth, yet nature will break bounds, and shew it self unto the disturbance and disquiet of themselves and others. *Naturam expellas furca, licet, usque recurret*. But where good nature and the grace of God meet, *Quam bene conveniunt*! how lovely and illustrious is that conjunction! This man was a most indulgent Father: and what a kind Husband, you may read in the tears and sighs, and almost overwhelming sorrow of his disconsolate Relict. And those to whom he was a Friend are ready to say, that they lost one of the best friends they had, when they lost him.

3. He was one of excellent, and considering his years it may truly be said, of incomparable Learning. He had great insight into Philosophy, he had studied the book of Nature. He had lookt into Controversies, and was most Orthodox and sound in his judgment, and very well able to defend the Faith, and convince gainfayers. And Languages he so well understood

derstood; and had so many of them, that he seemed almost to have a miraculous gift, somewhat like that vouchsafed the Disciples on the day of *Pentecost*. Besides his Mother-tongue, as I am informed, he understood *Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldee, Arabick, French, Dutch, Italian and Spanish*. And in several of these Languages which he spake, he was a very great Critick; and though he were so rare an *Hebrician*, and so well acquainted with Rabinical learning, yet which is very unusual, he was a most fluent and eloquent Orator.

4. His abilities for Prayer and Preaching were more than ordinary. His Infirmities were helped; he would fill his mouth with arguments when he was at the Throne of Grace, and wrestled with great skill and strength, that he might obtain a blessing. And when he preached, he shewed himself to be an *Apollo*, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures. What was said by those flatterers concerning *Herod* when he made an Oration, might truly be said of him when he was in the Pulpit, his voice was the voice of God, and not of man. If God had not spoken by him, his word could not have been with such power. When secure souls were awakened out of the sleep of death, when sinners were converted unto God by his Sermons, when faith was wrought, and a work of new creation, we may be assured 'twas God spake, and not Man.

5. He was a man of great Prudence, he ordered his affairs with discretion; he knew how to take care of the Church of God, to please men for their good to edification; he was no admirer of earthly wisdom and policy, which is so much admired and studied by many, but accounted it a great piece of wisdom to win souls. He excelled in that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, and then peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

6. His Courage was undaunted, no danger could deter him from

Death of a Preacher

from his duty: he was engaged in the work of God, and was sensible that God was with him, therefore he went on with an holy magnanimity. That Scripture seems to have had great impression upon him, Jer. 1. 17, 18, 19, *Thou therefore gird up thy loins and arise and speak unto them all that I command thee; be not dismayed at their faces lest I confound thee before them: for behold I have made thee this day a fenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land, and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.*

7. Notwithstanding all his Accomplishments, he was very humble, very high in other mens esteem, but low in his own. He did not affect to make a noise, and to make every body know what was in him; but his worth was like the deep waters which run silently.

8. His love to souls was exceeding great, so that he sacrificed his time, his strength, his parts, his health, and at last his life for them. He well understood the value of Souls, and the danger they are in; and he spent himself that they might be saved. He was instant in season, and out of season; he did reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. He knew that Souls were purchased by the Blood of God, and therefore were worthy of his care; and though he was of a weak Constitution, though Hectick and Consumptive, yet he preached while he was able, that he might warn them to flee from future wrath, and woo them to give their consents to be betrothed to the Lord for ever. Health was impair'd, afflictions did abide him, but none of these things moved him, neither counted he his life dear unto himself that he might finish his course with joy, and the Ministry which he received of the Lord Jesus Christ, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.

Alas! alas! and again I say Alas! that such an one should live

and the Lord himself shall comfort you, and shall be with you in the day of his grace. Thus I may assure unto your people of *Jerusalem*, I will have left it unto your remembrance, and a strong man to your heart. *Weep over Saul*, said David, and *who shall grieve for him with other delight*. You have much more reason to weep over this young *Saul*, who endeavoured to have you clothed with the spotted robe of your Lord *Highpriest*, who urged you to walk in the most pleasant and delightful ways of holiness and purity; and when if at any time he made you sad, it was, that flowing in tears you might afterwards reap to the more solid, abundant, and everlasting joy.

But though this Congregation are bereaved of their dear Pastor, and left in sadness; and this is a grievous mourning among you, as there was among them that carried *David* to his Sepulchre; yet you shall know, that your Shepherd whom you mourn for, is now an object fit for lamentation. The time of Sin, and sorrow, and labour, and suffering is come to a perpetual end. Methinks I see the Angels doing their office, and carrying away his Soul to *Paradise*; methinks I hear the shout and triumph there was at his entrance and Coronation in the New *Jerusalem*. While he was with you *He knew but in part, and prophesied but in part: but now that which is perfect is come, and that which was in part is done away*. He has fixed his eye upon the face of God, and there he will look and love, and rejoice, and be glad for ever. He has fought a good fight, and finished his course; and kept the faith, and was faithful to the death; and now has received the Crown of Righteousness and Immortality.

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